

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is a Response to the Office Action mailed January 10, 2007, in which a three (3) month Shortened Statutory Period for Response has been set, due to expire April 10, 2007. No claims have been canceled. Claims 58-62 have been added. The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090. Claims 1-7, 9-37, 41-49, and 57-62 are pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank Examiner Nguyen for indicating that claim 27 is allowable.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-7, 9-26, 28-37, 41-49, and 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,995,615 to Cheng in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,199,710 to Lamle. The Examiner acknowledges that Cheng does not disclose printing a plurality of playing cards and that Cheng discloses printing a sheet having the playing card values, in the sequence, printed thereon. The Examiner bases the present Section 103 rejection on the contention that it would have been obvious to print the generated pseudo-random playing sequence of Cheng on a plurality of playing cards as taught by Lamle “in order to prevent players from viewing the cards before the game play.” Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the reasons provided below.

Cheng Discloses a Video Card Game With Virtual (Video) Cards

Cheng discloses a system and method for verifying that a virtual (video) card game is “fair.” The fairness of the virtual card game is guaranteed by: (1) prior to the commencing of a game, printing on a sheet a sequence of numbers, where each one of the numbers represents a virtual cards; (2) concealing the sheet of numbers from the players of the virtual game; (3) dealing the “virtual cards” in the sequence; and (4) after the game, comparing the sequence of the “dealt” virtual cards to the sequence of numbers on the printed sheet. In particular, Cheng discloses that a computer “shuffles” virtual cards by generating randomly distinct numbers representing each card in a card game. (Sec, col. 2, lines 65-67.) The sequence

of the numbers is then printed on a sheet, which is concealed from players until the game is over. (See, col. 3, lines 1-5, and Figure 1.) The virtual cards are distributed to players based upon known rules for the game, and the distributed virtual cards are displayed “sequentially on monitors.” (See, col. 3, lines 20-26.) After the game, the printed sheet is “sent out to be further compared with the sequence of [virtual] cards displayed on the monitor 11 to check whether both are the same.” (See, col. 3, lines 42-51.) Thus, Cheng discloses a “fair” virtual card game in which: 1) a sequence of virtual cards is determined; 2) prior to dealing a first virtual card, a sequence of numbers representing the virtual cards is printed on a sheet; 3) virtual cards are dealt according to the sequence of virtual cards; and 4) after the game, the fairness of the virtual card game is verified by comparing the order in which the virtual cards were dealt with the sheet having the sequence of numbers.

The Proposed Modification Cannot Change The Principle of Operation

If the proposed modification or combination of the prior art would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified, then the teachings of the references are not sufficient to render the claims *prima facie* obvious. *In re Ratti*, 270 F.2d 810, 123 U.S.P.Q. 349 (C.C.P.A. 1959). (See, MPEP 2143.01 VI.) The Examiner has proposed modifying Cheng to print the pseudo-random playing card sequence on a plurality of playing cards as “taught by Lamle.” Such a modification would change the principle of operation of Cheng from a virtual card game to an actual card game. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has failed to meet his burden of establishing *prima facie* obviousness. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-7, 9-26, 28-37, 41-49, and 57 be withdrawn.

The Proposed Modification Cannot Render the Prior Art Unsatisfactory for Its Intended Purpose

If the proposed modification or combination of the prior art would render the prior art invention being modified unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, then there is no suggestion or motivation to make the proposed modification. *In re Gordon*, 733 F.2d 900, 221 U.S.P.Q. 1125 (Fed. Cir. 1984). (See, MPEP 2143.01 V.) Applicants respectfully submit Cheng

teaches away from printing individual playing cards. Prior to beginning a virtual card game, Cheng teaches printing on a sheet a sequence of numbers representing the virtual cards. After the game, Cheng teaches comparing the order in which the virtual cards were dealt with the sequence of numbers on the sheet. If, instead of printing Cheng's sheet of numbers, individual playing cards were printed as taught by Lamle, then the individual playing cards could be rearranged to match the order in which the "virtual" playing cards were dealt. Thus, printing individual cards would render Cheng's method of verifying the "fairness" of a virtual card game unsatisfactory. Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has failed to meet his burden of establishing prima facie obviousness, and therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-7, 9-26, 28-37, 41-49, and 57 be withdrawn.

Lamle Teaches Away From Generating A Sequence of Pseudo-Random Playing Cards

Applicants respectfully submit that Lamle teaches away from generating a pseudo-random playing card sequence.

Lamle teaches a central processing unit CPU can store in memory data indicative of a series of possible card values for desired games and the CPU may simulate a deck of finite length and a deck of **infinite length**. To simulate a deck of finite length, Lamle teaches the CPU can store in memory a record of previously selected and printed card values, remove such values from the stored series available so that only previously unselected card values can be delivered to the printer thereby simulating dealing from one or more decks of finite length, the card values remaining for selection corresponding only to those remaining in a deck from which known cards have been dealt. Whereas, to simulate a deck of infinite length, Lamle teaches that the CPU is programmed to generate random signals representing selected of those card values without regard to previously generated signals. (See column 3, lines 13-35.) Thus, to simulate an infinite deck, the CPU (1) generates a random number corresponding to a card value and (2) prints a card with the card value and (3) repeats the steps (generating and printing) for each card to be dealt without regard to a previously generated random number.

If the CPU were modified to use a sequence of pseudo-random playing cards, then Applicants submit that the CPU would no longer be able to simulate a deck of infinite length. Applicants submit that to simulate a pseudo-random deck of infinite length would

apparently require a sequence of pseudo-random playing card values of infinite length. Applicants submit that there is no apparent indication of the memory of the CPU being capable of storing a sequence of infinite length. Therefore, for at least the reason that it is an apparent aspect that the invention of Lamle may simulate a deck of infinite length, Applicants respectfully submit that Lamle teaches away from generating a sequence of pseudo-random playing card values.

All Claim Limitations Must Taught or Suggested

To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974). "All words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art." *In re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 1385, 165 U.S.P.Q. 494, 496 (C.C.P.A. 1970). (See, MPEP 2143.03.)

a. Combination of Cheng and Lamle Fails to Disclose a Card Shoe

Claim 3 recites, *inter alia*, "removing an **ordered stack of playing cards** from a card shoe." (Emphasis added.) The Office Action relies upon Lamle for disclosing the aforementioned limitation. Lamle discloses storing card stock in a card stock store (16). (See, column 3, lines 3-10.) However, Applicants submit that a piece of "card stock" is not a "playing card." In particular, a "playing card" has a card value printed thereon. Whereas, a piece of card stock in the card stock store is apparently blank and does not have a card value is printed thereon. Thus, removing card stock from the card stock store cannot be the same as "removing an ordered stack of playing cards from a card shoe," as claimed in claim 3. In addition, Lamle discloses that after a piece of card stock is removed from the card stock store, "[a] printer prints an indicia [card value] on the face of the card stock ... and the card is immediately delivered through the delivery slot by the delivery belt onto the table surface." (See, col. 3, lines 35-39.) Thus, Lamle is not removing an ordered stack of playing cards. Instead, Lamle is removing a piece of "card stock" [which is apparently blank]; printing a card value on the piece of "card stock"; and then, immediately delivering the "playing card" to the table surface. There is no apparent indication of a stack of *playing cards*. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that

Cheng and Lamle apparently fail, individually and collectively, to disclose the aforementioned limitation. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 4 recites, *inter alia*, “removing the **playing cards** in order one-by-one **from a card shoe**.” (Emphasis added.) The Office Action relies upon Lamle for disclosing the aforementioned limitation. As described above, a piece of card stock in the card stock store is not a playing card, and thus, removing a piece of card stock from the card stock store is not the same as removing a playing cards. Furthermore, Applicants submit that Lamle apparently fails to disclose removing playing cards from a “card shoe.” Applicants submit that “card shoes” are well known in the art, and Applicants submit that a “card shoe” may be used at a gaming table to hold one or more decks of playing cards. As described above, Lamle discloses a printer receives a card stock; the printer prints an indicia [card value] on the face of the card stock; and a playing card is immediately delivered through the delivery slot by the delivery belt onto the table surface. (See, col. 3, lines 35-39.) Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Cheng and Lamle apparently fail, individually and collectively, to disclose the aforementioned limitation. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Regarding claim 26, the Examiner asserts that “storing the printed playing cards in a card shoe ... would have been well known to a person of ordinary skill in art,” which Applicants believe is an implicit admission by the Examiner that Cheng and Lamle fail, individually and collectively, to disclose the aforementioned limitation. Applicants respectfully submit that “storing printed playing cards in a card shoe” would alter the principle of operation of both Chang and Lamle and that they teach away from storing playing cards in a card shoe. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

b. Combination of Cheng and Lamle Fails to Disclose “Back-to-Front”

Claim 6 recites, *inter alia*, “printing the playing cards from a back-to-front direction of the first pseudo-random playing card sequence,” and claims 22 and 48 contain similar limitations. At page 3, the Office Action states that “Lamle discloses printing playing cards on opposite faces of the card stock.” Applicants submit that a sequence has a front and a back, and that the limitation of claim 6 is not directed towards which face of a card stock is being printed upon. Rather, the limitation of claim 6 is directed towards the direction in which the

sequence of playing cards is being printed. Applicants respectfully submit that Cheng and Lamle apparently fail, individually and collectively, to disclose the aforementioned limitation. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 6, 22 and 48 be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Overall, the cited references do not, singly or in any motivated combination, teach or suggest the claimed features of the embodiments recited in the independent claims, and thus such claims are allowable. Because the remaining claims depend from the allowable independent claims, and also because they include additional limitations, such claims are likewise allowable. If the undersigned attorney has overlooked a relevant teaching in any of the references, the Examiner is requested to point out specifically where such teaching may be found.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider this application and timely allow all pending claims. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Mr. Ringer by telephone to discuss the above and any other distinctions between the claims and the applied references, if desired. If the Examiner notes any informalities in the claims, he is encouraged to contact Mr. Ringer by telephone to expediently correct such informalities.

Respectfully submitted,
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